

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

**This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:**

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (canceled).

2. (currently amended): The liquid development apparatus of claim 1, A liquid development apparatus in which an electrostatic latent image formed on an image carrier is developed by means of a liquid developer including charged toner dispersed in a carrier liquid, comprising:  
a liquid developer carrier which transports said liquid developer toward a predetermined developing position while carrying said liquid developer on its surface; and  
density adjusting means which performs adjustment of a toner density in said liquid developer on said liquid developer carrier, wherein

said density adjusting means comprises at least one stripping member which is disposed facing an area on said liquid developer carrier extending from a carrying start position, at which carrying of said liquid developer starts, to said developing position, contacts said liquid developer carried on said liquid developer carrier, and strips off a portion of said liquid developer, and

an amount of toner contained in said portion of said liquid developer stripped off by said stripping member is controlled, whereby said adjustment is performed.

3. (original): The liquid development apparatus of claim 2, wherein  
said density adjusting means further comprises voltage applying means which applies a bias voltage between said stripping member and said liquid developer carrier, and  
the bias voltage applied by said voltage applying means is controlled, whereby the amount of toner contained in said portion of said liquid developer is controlled.

4. (original): The liquid development apparatus of claim 2, wherein  
said density adjusting means comprises a plurality of said stripping members which are arranged next to each other along a liquid developer transporting direction for transportation by said liquid developer carrier in such a manner that said plurality of said stripping members are faced against said liquid developer carrier, and  
the amount of toner contained in said portion of said liquid developer stripped off by each one of said plurality of said stripping members is controlled.

5. (original): The liquid development apparatus of claim 4, wherein

said density adjusting means further comprises a plurality of voltage applying means which apply bias voltages between said plurality of said stripping members and said liquid developer carrier, and

the bias voltages applied by said plurality of voltage applying means are controlled, whereby the amount of toner contained in said portion of said liquid developer is controlled.

6. (original): The liquid development apparatus of claim 2, wherein said stripping member is disposed to move between an adjacent position at which said stripping member contacts with said liquid developer carried on said liquid developer carrier, and a clear-off position at which said stripping member is off said liquid developer.

7. (original): The liquid development apparatus of claim 2, further comprising a container which holds said liquid developer, wherein said portion of said liquid developer stripped off by said stripping member is returned back to said container.

8. (canceled).

9. (currently amended): ~~The liquid development apparatus of claim 8,~~ A liquid development apparatus in which an electrostatic latent image formed on an image carrier is

developed by means of a liquid developer including charged toner dispersed in a carrier liquid,

comprising:

\_\_\_\_\_ a liquid developer carrier which transports said liquid developer toward a predetermined  
developing position while carrying said liquid developer on its surface;

\_\_\_\_\_ density adjusting means which performs adjustment of a toner density in said liquid  
developer on said liquid developer carrier;

\_\_\_\_\_ a container which holds said liquid developer;

\_\_\_\_\_ liquid developer supplying means which supplies said liquid developer held in said  
container to said liquid developer carrier,

\_\_\_\_\_ wherein said density adjusting means controls an amount of toner contained in said liquid  
developer which is supplied to said liquid developer carrier from said container by said liquid  
developer supplying means, whereby said adjustment is performed, wherein

said liquid developer supplying means comprises a liquid developer coating member  
which carries said liquid developer held in said container on its surface, brings thus carried liquid  
developer into contact with said liquid developer carrier and makes a portion of said liquid  
developer move toward said liquid developer carrier to thereby make said liquid developer  
carrier carry said liquid developer, and

said density adjusting means controls the amount of toner contained in said portion of  
said liquid developer which moves toward said liquid developer carrier from said liquid  
developer coating member.

10. (original): The liquid development apparatus of claim 9, wherein

said density adjusting means comprises coating voltage applying means which applies a bias voltage between said liquid developer coating member and said liquid developer carrier, and

the bias voltage applied by said coating voltage applying means is controlled, whereby the amount of toner contained in said portion of said liquid developer is controlled.

11. (original): The liquid development apparatus of claim 9, wherein

said liquid developer supplying means further comprises a scoop-up member which scoops up said liquid developer held in said container,

said liquid developer coating member contacts said liquid developer which is scooped up by said scoop-up member and carries on its surface a portion of said liquid developer thus scooped up, and

said density adjusting means controls the amount of toner contained in said portion of said liquid developer which moves from said scoop-up member toward said liquid developer coating member.

12. (original): The liquid development apparatus of claim 11, wherein

said density adjusting means comprises scoop-up voltage applying means which applies a bias voltage between said scoop-up member and said liquid developer coating member, and

the bias voltage applied by said scoop-up voltage applying means is controlled, whereby the amount of toner contained in said portion of said liquid developer is controlled.

13. (original): The liquid development apparatus of claim 9, wherein  
said liquid developer supplying means further comprises a plurality of scoop-up members which scoop up said liquid developer held in said container,  
said liquid developer coating member contacts said liquid developer scooped up by said plurality of scoop-up members and carries on its surface a portion of said liquid developer thus scooped up, and  
said density adjusting means controls the amount of toner contained in said liquid developer which moves from at least one of said plurality of scoop-up members toward said liquid developer coating member.

14. (original): The liquid development apparatus of claim 13, wherein  
said density adjusting means comprises scoop-up voltage applying means which applies a bias voltage between at least one of said plurality of scoop-up members and said liquid developer coating member, and  
the bias voltage applied by said scoop-up voltage applying means is controlled, whereby the amount of toner contained in said liquid developer is controlled.

15. (canceled).

16. (currently amended): ~~The liquid development apparatus of claim 1, further comprising:~~ A liquid development apparatus in which an electrostatic latent image formed on an image carrier is developed by means of a liquid developer including charged toner dispersed in a carrier liquid, comprising:

a liquid developer carrier which transports said liquid developer toward a predetermined developing position while carrying said liquid developer on its surface;

density adjusting means which performs adjustment of a toner density in said liquid developer on said liquid developer carrier;

a container which holds said liquid developer; and

a plurality of liquid developer supplying means which supply said liquid developer held in said container to said liquid developer carrier,

wherein said density adjusting means controls an amount of toner contained in said liquid developer supplied from said container to said liquid developer carrier by each one of said plurality of liquid developer supplying means, whereby said adjustment is performed.

17. (original): The liquid development apparatus of claim 16, wherein

each one of said plurality of liquid developer supplying means comprises a liquid developer coating member which carries said liquid developer held in said container on its

surface, brings thus carried liquid developer into contact with said liquid developer carrier and makes a portion of said liquid developer move toward said liquid developer carrier to thereby make said liquid developer carrier carry said liquid developer, and

said density adjusting means controls the amount of toner contained in said liquid developer which moves from each one of said plurality of liquid developer coating members toward said liquid developer carrier.

18. (original): The liquid development apparatus of claim 17, wherein

said density adjusting means comprises coating voltage applying means which applies a bias voltage between each one of said plurality of liquid developer coating members and said liquid developer carrier, and

each bias voltage applied by said coating voltage applying means is controlled, whereby the amount of toner contained in said liquid developer which moves from each one of said plurality of liquid developer coating members toward said liquid developer carrier is controlled.

19. (original): The liquid development apparatus of claim 16, wherein each one of said plurality of liquid developer supplying means comprises:

a scoop-up member which scoops up said liquid developer held in said container; and

a liquid developer coating member which contacts said liquid developer scooped up by said scoop-up member and accordingly carries a portion of said liquid developer on its surface,



brings thus carried liquid developer into contact with said liquid developer carrier and accordingly makes said liquid developer carrier carry a portion of thus carried liquid developer, and

wherein said density adjusting means controls the amount of toner contained in said liquid developer which moves from each one of said scoop-up members toward each corresponding one of said liquid developer coating members, and controls the amount of toner contained in said liquid developer which moves from each one of said liquid developer coating members toward said liquid developer carrier.

20. (original): The liquid development apparatus of claim 19, wherein said density adjusting means comprises:

scoop-up voltage applying means which applies a bias voltage between each one of said scoop-up members and each corresponding one of said liquid developer coating members; and

coating voltage applying means which applies a bias voltage between each one of said liquid developer coating members and said liquid developer carrier,

wherein each bias voltage applied by said scoop-up voltage applying means is controlled, whereby the amount of toner contained in said liquid developer which moves from each one of said scoop-up members toward each corresponding one of said liquid developer coating members is controlled, and

wherein each bias voltage applied by said coating voltage applying means is controlled, whereby the amount of toner contained in said liquid developer which moves from each one of said liquid developer coating members toward said liquid developer carrier is controlled.

21. (original): The liquid development apparatus of claim 16, wherein of said liquid developer transported by said liquid developer supplying means to outside said container from within said container, said liquid developer failing to be carried on said liquid developer carrier is returned back to said container.

22. (currently amended): ~~The liquid development apparatus of claim 1, further comprising~~ A liquid development apparatus in which an electrostatic latent image formed on an image carrier is developed by means of a liquid developer including charged toner dispersed in a carrier liquid, comprising:

a liquid developer carrier which transports said liquid developer toward a predetermined developing position while carrying said liquid developer on its surface;

density adjusting means which performs adjustment of a toner density in said liquid developer on said liquid developer carrier;

a container which holds said liquid developer,

wherein said density adjusting means comprises at least one stripping member which is disposed facing against an area on said liquid developer carrier located on a downstream side to

said developing position along liquid developer transporting direction for transportation by said liquid developer carrier, and which contacts said liquid developer remaining on said liquid developer carrier after the end of development and accordingly strips off a portion of said liquid developer,

an amount of toner contained in said portion of said liquid developer stripped off by said stripping member is controlled, whereby said adjustment is performed, and

said portion of said liquid developer stripped off by said stripping member is returned back to said container.

23. (currently amended): ~~The liquid development apparatus of claim 1, further comprising:~~ A liquid development apparatus in which an electrostatic latent image formed on an image carrier is developed by means of a liquid developer including charged toner dispersed in a carrier liquid, comprising:

a liquid developer carrier which transports said liquid developer toward a predetermined developing position while carrying said liquid developer on its surface;

density adjusting means which performs adjustment of a toner density in said liquid developer on said liquid developer carrier;

a container which holds said liquid developer; and

a cleaning member which removes said liquid developer remaining on said liquid developer carrier at a cleaning position on said liquid developer carrier located on a downstream

side to said developing position along a liquid developer transporting direction for transportation by said liquid developer carrier,

wherein said density adjusting means comprises at least one stripping member which is disposed facing against an area on said liquid developer carrier extending from said developing position to said cleaning position, and which contacts said liquid developer remaining on said liquid developer carrier after the end of development and accordingly strips off a portion of said liquid developer,

an amount of toner contained in said portion of said liquid developer stripped off by said stripping member is controlled, whereby said adjustment is performed,

said cleaning member removes said liquid developer remaining on said liquid developer carrier after said stripping member has stripped off said portion of said liquid developer, and

said liquid developer removed by said cleaning member is returned back to said container.

24. (canceled).

25. (canceled).

26. (canceled).

27. (canceled).

28. (currently amended): ~~The image forming apparatus of claim 26, further comprising~~ An image forming apparatus, comprising:  
exposure means which forms an electrostatic latent image on a surface of an image carrier;  
developing means which develops said electrostatic latent image by means of a liquid developer including charged toner dispersed in a carrier liquid and accordingly forms a toner image;  
transfer means which transfers said toner image thus formed onto a transfer medium,  
wherein said developing means comprises a liquid developer carrier which transports said liquid developer toward a predetermined developing position while carrying said liquid developer on its surface, and density adjusting means which performs adjustment of a toner density in said liquid developer on said liquid developer carrier; and

optical density detecting means which detects an optical density of a toner image which is obtained as said developing means develops said electrostatic latent image,

wherein said density adjusting means performs said adjustment based on said optical density thus detected.

29. (original): An image forming apparatus, comprising:

an image carrier structured to carry an electrostatic latent image on its surface;

a container which holds a liquid developer including charged toner dispersed in a carrier liquid;

a liquid developer carrier which transports said liquid developer toward a predetermined developing position while carrying said liquid developer on its surface, brings said liquid developer into contact with said image carrier at said developing position, and accordingly supplies said liquid developer to said image carrier;

image forming means which makes toner contained in said liquid developer supplied to said image carrier from said liquid developer carrier adhere to said image carrier, visualizes said electrostatic latent image and accordingly forms a toner image; and

collecting means which collects said carrier liquid contained in said liquid developer supplied from said liquid developer carrier at said developing position and adhering to said image carrier, and returns said carrier liquid back into said container,

wherein a returning amount of said carrier liquid returned by said collecting means back into said container is adjustable.

30. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 29, wherein said collecting means is structured to adjust a collection amount of said carrier liquid, and returns all of collected said carrier liquid of the adjusted collection amount back into said container.

31. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 30, wherein

said collecting means comprises a stripping member which is structured to be disposed at a contacting position at which said stripping member contacts said liquid developer on said image carrier, and strips off said carrier liquid which is in a surface layer of said liquid developer when disposed at said contacting position, and

a stripped amount of said carrier liquid stripped off by said stripping member is controlled, thereby adjusting said collection amount.

32. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 31, wherein

said collecting means comprises, as said stripping member, a plurality of stripping members which are arranged next to each other along a liquid developer transporting direction for transportation by said image carrier in such a manner that said plurality of stripping members are faced against said image carrier,

at least one of said plurality of stripping members is structured to move between said contacting position and a clear-off position which is off said liquid developer on said image carrier, and

a combination of said plurality of stripping members contacting said liquid developer on said image carrier is controlled through position control of said stripping member structured to move, thereby controlling said stripped amount.

33. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 31, wherein

said collecting means comprises, as said stripping member, a stripping member which is structured to be disposed at a plurality of contacting positions which are at different distances from said image carrier from each other and at which said stripping member contacts said liquid developer on said image carrier, and

said contacting position of said stripping member is changed, thereby controlling said stripped amount.

34. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 31, wherein a relative velocity of a contact surface of said stripping member relative to said liquid developer which is transported by said image carrier is changed, thereby controlling said stripped amount.

35. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 31, wherein

said collecting means further comprises a cleaning member which removes said carrier liquid which has been stripped off by said stripping member from said stripping member, and

said carrier liquid removed by said cleaning member is returned back to said container.

36. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 35, wherein

said cleaning member abuts on said stripping member and scrapes off said carrier liquid from said stripping member, and



an opening of said container stretches out toward below an abutting position at which said cleaning member abuts on said stripping member so that said carrier liquid removed by said cleaning member will return by its own weight back into said container.

37. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 30, further comprising calculating means which calculates an image occupation ratio which is a ratio of an image portion to said electrostatic latent image,

wherein said collection amount is adjusted in accordance with said image occupation ratio.

38. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 30, wherein said collection amount is adjusted so that a toner density in said liquid developer which remains on said image carrier after said collecting means has collected said carrier liquid will become closer to an initial value of the toner density in said liquid developer held in said container.

39. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 29, further comprising toner density detecting means which detects a toner density in said liquid developer held in said container,

wherein said returning amount is adjusted so that the toner density detected by said toner density detecting means will become closer to an initial value of the toner density in said liquid developer held in said container.

40. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 29, further comprising transfer means which transfers the toner image on said image carrier onto a transfer medium,

wherein said collecting means collects said carrier liquid off from said image carrier before transfer of the toner image onto said transfer medium.

41. (original): An image forming method in which an electrostatic latent image formed on an image carrier is developed by means of a liquid developer including charged toner dispersed in a carrier liquid, comprising:

a liquid developer supplying step of transporting said liquid developer toward a predetermined developing position while carrying said liquid developer on a surface of a liquid developer carrier, bringing said liquid developer into contact with said image carrier at said developing position, and accordingly supplying said liquid developer to said image carrier;

an image forming step of making toner contained in said liquid developer supplied to said image carrier from said liquid developer carrier adhere to said image carrier, visualizing said electrostatic latent image and accordingly forming a toner image; and

a collecting step of collecting said carrier liquid contained in said liquid developer supplied from said liquid developer carrier at said developing position and adhering to said image carrier, and returning said carrier liquid back into said container,

wherein said returning amount of said carrier liquid returned back to said container at said collecting step is adjusted.

42. (original): An image forming apparatus, comprising:

an image carrier structured to carry an electrostatic latent image on its surface;

a liquid developer carrier which transports a liquid developer including charged toner dispersed in a carrier liquid toward a predetermined developing position while carrying said liquid developer on its surface, brings said liquid developer into contact with said image carrier at said developing position, and accordingly supplies said liquid developer to said image carrier; and

image forming means which makes toner contained in said liquid developer supplied to said image carrier from said liquid developer carrier adhere to said image carrier, visualizes said electrostatic latent image and accordingly forms a toner image,

wherein a consumption amount of said carrier liquid which is consumed for formation of the toner image is adjusted.

43. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 42, wherein

said liquid developer carrier is structured to move between a development-permitting position, at which said liquid developer on said liquid developer carrier is brought into contact with said image carrier at said developing position, and a clear-off position at which said liquid developer on said liquid developer carrier does not contact said image carrier, and

said consumption amount is adjusted through position control of said liquid developer carrier.

44. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 42, further comprising collecting means which collects a portion of said carrier liquid contained in said liquid developer which is transported toward said developing position while carried on said liquid developer carrier,

wherein a collection amount of said carrier liquid collected by said collecting means is controlled, thereby adjusting said consumption amount.

45. (original): The liquid development apparatus of claim 44, wherein said collecting means comprises a stripping member which is structured to be disposed at a contacting position at which said stripping member contacts said liquid developer on said liquid developer carrier in an area extending from a carrying start position, at which carrying of said liquid developer starts, to said developing position, and which strips off said carrier liquid

which is in a surface layer of said liquid developer when disposed at said contacting position,  
and

a stripped amount of said carrier liquid stripped off by said stripping member is  
controlled, thereby controlling said collection amount.

46. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 45, wherein  
said collecting means comprises, as said stripping member, a plurality of stripping  
members which are arranged next to each other along a liquid developer transporting direction  
for transportation by said liquid developer carrier in such a manner that said plurality of stripping  
members are faced against said liquid developer carrier,  
at least one of said plurality of stripping members is structured to move between said  
contacting position and a clear-off position which is off said liquid developer on said liquid  
developer carrier, and  
a combination of said plurality of stripping members contacting said liquid developer on  
said liquid developer carrier is controlled through position control of said stripping member  
structured to move, thereby controlling said stripped amount.

47. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 45, wherein  
said collecting means comprises, as said stripping member, a stripping member which is  
structured to be disposed at a plurality of contacting positions which are at different distances

from said liquid developer carrier from each other and at which said stripping member contacts said liquid developer on said liquid developer carrier, and

said contacting position of said stripping member is changed, thereby controlling said stripped amount.

48. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 45, wherein a relative velocity of a contact surface of said stripping member relative to said liquid developer which is transported by said liquid developer carrier is changed, thereby controlling said stripped amount.

49. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 45, further comprising voltage applying means which applies a bias voltage, which makes toner contained in said liquid developer move toward said liquid developer carrier, between said stripping member and said liquid developer carrier.

50. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 46, further comprising:  
a container which holds said liquid developer; and  
a cleaning member which removes said carrier liquid which has been stripped off by said stripping member from said stripping member,  
wherein said carrier liquid removed by said cleaning member is returned back to said container.

51. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 50, wherein

said cleaning member abuts on said stripping member and scrapes off said carrier liquid from said stripping member, and

an opening of said container stretches out toward below an abutting position at which said cleaning member abuts on said stripping member so that said carrier liquid removed by said cleaning member will return by its own weight back into said container.

52. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 42, further comprising:

transfer means which transfers the toner image on said image carrier onto a transfer medium at a predetermined transfer position; and

collecting means which collects a portion of said carrier liquid contained in said liquid developer which is transported toward said transfer position from said developing position while carried on said image carrier,

wherein a collection amount of said carrier liquid collected by said collecting means is controlled, thereby adjusting said consumption amount.

53. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 52, wherein

said collecting means comprises a stripping member which is structured to be disposed at a contacting position at which said stripping member contacts said liquid developer on said

image carrier, and strips off said carrier liquid which is in a surface layer of said liquid developer when disposed at said contacting position, and

a stripped amount of said carrier liquid stripped off by said stripping member is controlled, thereby controlling said collection amount.

54. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 53, wherein  
said collecting means comprises, as said stripping member, a plurality of stripping members which are arranged next to each other along a liquid developer transporting direction for transportation by said image carrier in such a manner that said plurality of stripping members are faced against said image carrier,

at least one of said plurality of stripping members is structured to move between said contacting position and a clear-off position which is off said liquid developer on said image carrier, and

a combination of said plurality of stripping members contacting said liquid developer on said image carrier is controlled through position control of said stripping member structured to move, thereby controlling said stripped amount.

55. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 53, wherein  
said collecting means comprises, as said stripping member, a stripping member which is structured to be disposed at a plurality of contacting positions which are at different distances



from said image carrier from each other and at which said stripping member contacts said liquid developer on said image carrier, and

said contacting position of said stripping member is changed, thereby controlling said stripped amount.

56. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 53, wherein a relative velocity of a contact surface of said stripping member relative to said liquid developer which is transported by said image carrier is changed, thereby controlling said stripped amount.

57. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 53, further comprising:  
a container which holds said liquid developer; and  
a cleaning member which removes said carrier liquid which has been stripped off by said stripping member from said stripping member,  
wherein said carrier liquid removed by said cleaning member is returned back to said container.

58. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 57, wherein  
said cleaning member abuts on said stripping member and scrapes off said carrier liquid from said stripping member, and

an opening of said container stretches out toward below an abutting position at which said cleaning member abuts on said stripping member so that said carrier liquid removed by said cleaning member will return by its own weight back into said container.

59. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 52, wherein said collection amount is controlled so that a toner density in said liquid developer which remains on said image carrier after said collecting means has collected said carrier liquid will become closer to a predetermined value.

60. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 42, further comprising calculating means which calculates an image occupation ratio which is a ratio of an image portion to said electrostatic latent image,

wherein said consumption amount is adjusted in accordance with said image occupation ratio.

61. (original): An image forming method in which an electrostatic latent image formed on an image carrier is developed by means of a liquid developer including charged toner dispersed in a carrier liquid, comprising:

a step of transporting said liquid developer toward a predetermined developing position, making toner contained in said liquid developer adhere to said image carrier at said developing position, visualizing said electrostatic latent image and accordingly forming a toner image; and

a step of adjusting a consumption amount of said carrier liquid which is consumed for formation of the toner image.

62. (original): An image forming apparatus, comprising:

an image carrier structured to carry an electrostatic latent image on its surface;

a liquid developer carrier which transports a liquid developer including charged toner dispersed in a carrier liquid toward a predetermined developing position while carrying said liquid developer on its surface, brings said liquid developer into contact with said image carrier at said developing position, and accordingly supplies said liquid developer to said image carrier;

image forming means which makes toner contained in said liquid developer supplied to said image carrier from said liquid developer carrier adhere to said image carrier, visualizes said electrostatic latent image and accordingly forms a toner image;

transfer means which transfers the toner image on said image carrier onto a transfer medium at a predetermined transfer position; and

stripping means which strips off said carrier liquid from said liquid developer on said image carrier in a developed image carrying area which extends from said developing position to said transfer position,

wherein a stripping amount of said carrier liquid which is stripped off by said stripping means is adjustable.

63. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 62, wherein

said stripping means comprises a stripping member which is structured to be disposed at a contacting position at which said stripping member contacts said liquid developer on said image carrier, and strips off said carrier liquid which is in a surface layer of said liquid developer when disposed at said contacting position, and

a stripped amount of said carrier liquid stripped off by said stripping member is controlled, thereby adjusting said stripping amount.

64. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 63, wherein

said stripping means comprises, as said stripping member, a plurality of stripping members which are arranged next to each other along a liquid developer transporting direction for transportation by said image carrier in such a manner that said plurality of stripping members are faced against said image carrier,

at least one of said plurality of stripping members is structured to move between said contacting position and a clear-off position which is off said liquid developer on said image carrier, and

a combination of said plurality of stripping members contacting said liquid developer on said image carrier is controlled through position control of said stripping member structured to move, thereby controlling said stripped amount.

65. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 63, wherein

said stripping means comprises, as said stripping member, a stripping member which is structured to be disposed at a plurality of contacting positions which are at different distances from said image carrier from each other and at which said stripping member contacts said liquid developer on said image carrier, and

said contacting position of said stripping member is changed, thereby controlling said stripped amount.

66. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 63, wherein a relative velocity of a contact surface of said stripping member relative to said liquid developer which is transported by said image carrier is changed, thereby controlling said stripped amount.

67. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 63, further comprising:

a container which holds said liquid developer; and

a cleaning member which removes said carrier liquid which has been stripped off by said stripping member from said stripping member,

wherein said carrier liquid removed by said cleaning member is returned back to said container.

68. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 67, wherein  
said cleaning member abuts on said stripping member and scrapes off said carrier liquid from said stripping member, and  
an opening of said container stretches out toward below an abutting position at which said cleaning member abuts on said stripping member so that said carrier liquid removed by said cleaning member will return by its own weight back into said container.

69. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 62, wherein said stripping amount is adjusted so that a toner density in said liquid developer which remains on said image carrier after said stripping means has stripped off said carrier liquid will become closer to a predetermined value.

70. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 62, further comprising a container which holds said liquid developer,  
wherein said carrier liquid stripped off by said stripping means is returned back to said container, and

said stripping amount is adjusted so that a toner density in said liquid developer which remains on said image carrier after said stripping means has stripped off said carrier liquid will become closer to an initial value of the toner density in said liquid developer held in said container.

71. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 62, further comprising calculating means which calculates an image occupation ratio which is a ratio of an image portion to said electrostatic latent image,

wherein said stripping amount is adjusted in accordance with said image occupation ratio.

72. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 62, further comprising:  
  
a container which holds said liquid developer; and  
  
toner density detecting means which detects a toner density in said liquid developer held in said container,

wherein said carrier liquid stripped off by said stripping means is returned back to said container, and

said stripping amount is adjusted so that the toner density detected by said toner density detecting means will become closer to an initial value of the toner density in said liquid developer held in said container.

73. (original): An image forming method, comprising:

an image forming step of transporting a liquid developer including charged toner dispersed in a carrier liquid toward a predetermined developing position, making toner contained in said liquid developer adhere to an image carrier at said developing position, visualizing an electrostatic latent image formed on said image carrier, and accordingly forming a toner image;

a transfer step of transferring the toner image on said image carrier onto a transfer medium at a predetermined transfer position; and

a stripping step of stripping off said carrier liquid from said liquid developer on said image carrier in a developed image carrying area which extends from said developing position to said transfer position,

wherein a stripping amount of said carrier liquid at said stripping step is adjusted.

74. (original): An image forming apparatus in which developing means is positioned to a predetermined development-permitting position relative to a latent image carrier which moves in a predetermined travel direction while carrying an electrostatic latent image on its surface, a liquid developer including charged toner dispersed in a carrier liquid is accordingly supplied from said developing means to said latent image carrier, said electrostatic latent image is visualized and a toner image is formed, said apparatus comprising:

an image carrier structured to carry N toner images (where N is an integer equal to or larger than 2) in a direction which corresponds to said travel direction; and



transfer means which transfers the toner image on said latent image carrier onto said image carrier,

wherein said developing means is structured to move between said development-permitting position and a clear-off position which is off said latent image carrier and at which therefore said liquid developer does not contact said latent image carrier, and

when said image carrier is to carry (N - 1) or fewer toner images, said developing means is positioned to said clear-off position so as to be responsive to a non-carrying area which does not carry a toner image.

75. (original): An image forming apparatus, comprising:

a latent image carrier structured to carry an electrostatic latent image on its surface;

a liquid developer carrier which transports a liquid developer including charged toner dispersed in a carrier liquid toward a predetermined developing position while carrying said liquid developer on its surface, brings said liquid developer into contact with said latent image carrier at said developing position, and accordingly supplies said liquid developer to said latent image carrier;

image forming means which makes toner contained in said liquid developer supplied to said latent image carrier from said liquid developer carrier adhere to said latent image carrier, visualizes said electrostatic latent image and accordingly forms a toner image;

an image carrier structured to carry on its surface the toner image formed on said latent image carrier; and

transfer means which transfers the toner image on said latent image carrier onto the surface of said image carrier at a predetermined transfer position,

wherein said liquid developer carrier is structured to move between a development-permitting position, at which said liquid developer on said liquid developer carrier is brought into contact with said latent image carrier at said developing position, and a clear-off position at which said liquid developer on said liquid developer carrier does not contact said latent image carrier,

said image carrier is formed by a rotating member whose surface moves passed said transfer position when said rotating member rotates, and the circumference of said image carrier is capable of carrying N toner images (where N is an integer equal to or larger than 2) in the rotation direction, and

at the time of transfer of (N-1) or fewer toner images by said transfer means onto the circumference of said image carrier, during a period which corresponds to a non-transfer area on said image carrier, said liquid developer carrier retracts to said clear-off position from said development-permitting position.

76. (original): The image forming apparatus of claim 74, wherein a plurality of liquid developers which contain mutually different toner colors are supplied as said liquid developer to said latent image carrier, to thereby form color toner images.

77. (original): An image forming method in which developing means is positioned to a predetermined development-permitting position relative to a latent image carrier which moves in a predetermined travel direction while carrying an electrostatic latent image on its surface, a liquid developer including charged toner dispersed in a carrier liquid is accordingly supplied from said developing means to said latent image carrier, said electrostatic latent image is visualized, a toner image is formed, and said toner image is transferred onto an image carrier,

wherein said image carrier is structured to carry maximum  $N$  toner images (where  $N$  is an integer equal to or larger than 2) in a direction which corresponds to said travel direction, and

when said image carrier is to carry  $(N - 1)$  or fewer toner images, said developing means is moved off from said latent image carrier so as to be responsive to a non-carrying area which does not carry a toner image, thereby ensuring that said liquid developer does not contact said latent image carrier.